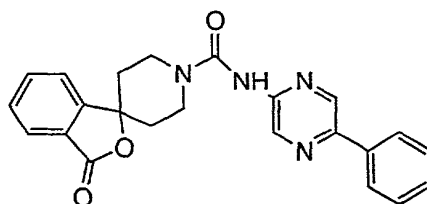


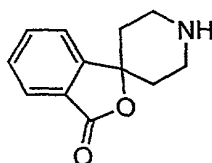
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for preparing a compound of formula I:

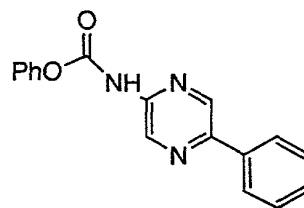


I

comprising coupling a compound of formula II with a compound of formula III in the presence of an organic base in a solvent system.



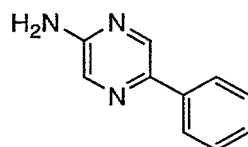
II



III

2. The process of Claim 1 wherein the organic base is selected from triethylamine,  $i\text{-Pr}_2\text{NEt}$ ,  $\text{NBu}_3$ ,  $\text{Me}_2\text{NBu}$  and  $\text{Me}_2\text{NBn}$ .
3. The process of Claim 1 wherein the solvent system is selected from the group consisting of MeCN, DMF, DMSO, THF, MeCN/water and DMF/water.
4. The process of Claim 1 further comprising the step of combining 2-amino-5-phenylpyrazine (IV) and phenyl chloroformate in an organic solvent system to yield the compound of formula III.
5. The process of Claim 4 wherein the organic solvent system is selected from the group consisting of THF, MeCN, DMF and any mixtures thereof.

6. The process of Claim 4 further comprising the step of combining 2-amino-5-bromopyrazine (V) and phenyl boronic acid in the presence of a catalyst to yield the compound of formula IV.

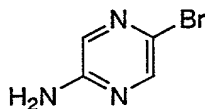


IV

7. The process of Claim 6 wherein the catalyst is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{PdCl}_2 \cdot \text{dppf} \cdot \text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{Pd}(\text{PPh}_3)_4$ ,  $\text{Pd}(\text{OAc})/\text{PPh}_3$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[(\text{Pet}_3)]_2$ ,  $\text{Pd}(\text{DIPHOS})_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}(\text{Bipy})$ ,  $[\text{PdCl}(\text{Ph}_2\text{PCH}_2\text{PPh}_2)]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{o-tol})_3]_2$ ,  $\text{Pd}_2(\text{dba})_3/\text{P}(\text{o-tol})_3$ ,  $\text{Pd}_2(\text{dba})/\text{P}(\text{furyl})_3$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{furyl})_3]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}(\text{PMePh}_2)_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{4-F-Ph})_3]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{C}_6\text{F}_6)_3]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{2-COOH-Ph})(\text{Ph})_2]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{4-COOH-Ph})(\text{Ph})_2]_2$ .

8. The process of Claim 7 wherein the catalyst is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{PdCl}_2 \cdot \text{dppf} \cdot \text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{Pd}(\text{PPh}_3)_4$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{4-F-Ph})_3]_2$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2\text{Pd}[\text{P}(\text{4-COOH-Ph})(\text{Ph})_2]_2$ .

9. The process of Claim 6 further comprising the step of combining 2-aminopyrazine and a bromination agent to yield the compound of formula V:



V

10. The process of Claim 9 wherein the bromination agent is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{Br}_2$ , NBS,  $\text{Bu}_4\text{NBr}_3$ , N-bromo acetamide and 1,3-dibromo-5,5-dimethylhydantoin.

11. The process of Claim 10 wherein the bromination agent is selected from the group consisting of NBS and 1,3-dibromo-5,5-dimethylhydantoin.